

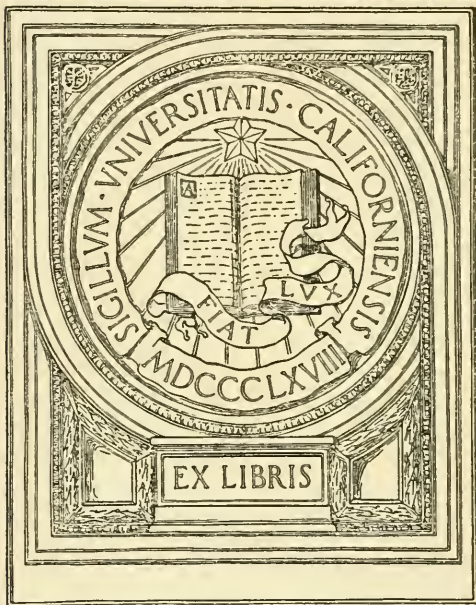
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Lambasting Public Service Corporations

By
E. E. WAGNER

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FRIENDLY SENTIMENT CO.

Rockefeller Building
CLEVELAND, OHIO, U. S. A.

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By E. E. Wagner

Cleveland, Ohio

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***T**O that unfair, unscrupulous, and dangerous individual, the editor of a Yellow Back Newspaper, and to his equally dangerous crony, the blackleg politician, this book is dedicated, with the hope that it will help them to realize the injury and unpleasantness that is caused by their miserable dishonesty with the people they are supposed to serve and protect.*

Author's Plea

A FEW years ago I was muckraking public service corporations.

I abhorred public service men and they despised me.

Our mutual hatred was the result of misunderstanding.

And the public service corporations were largely at fault.

They had never told me anything about their problems or their service other than try to persuade me to use it.

They were stand-offish, secretive, mysterious and suspicious acting.

Their's was not a business founded on friendship and apparently they made no effort to make and keep friends.

They were selling a necessity that had to be used whether you were friendly or not? If they sold their output, they seemed to be satisfied.

Notice that I say "they seemed to be satisfied."

They were not satisfied! I have since learned that they wanted to be friendly and wanted friends, but they had been repulsed so often in their advances that it seemed to be misdirected energy to try any longer.

For years they had borne in silence a tirade of censure and abuse from the Yellow Back newspapers and non-descript politicians, that had almost led them to believe that it was hopeless to try and make friends.

They knew that most of the criticism directed against them was untrue and prompted by selfish motives. And they had abiding faith in the maxim "Right Wins, Might Never." But they were mistaken in thinking that Right could win without some assistance.

Public service corporations are now awakening from their lethargy. They are commencing to talk about themselves and making it really difficult for Yellow Backs to cram down the throats of the people wild stories about immense profits, legislative pussyfooting, court control, etc.

This change in sentiment is also being aided by municipal experiments and failures with public service plants of one kind and another. These plants are proving to the people that the privately owned public utility has been giving them a square deal and that they can give better service at less cost than a plaything in the hands of politicians. The people are also beginning to realize that somebody has not given them absolute facts.

Just this morning I was talking with a keen-scented old public service man whose intelligent perceptions of the future are highly regarded by all who know him. While we were talking he said:

"The time is not far distant when Yellow Back newspapers will be a forgotten menace of the past. They have their own graves half dug at the present time.

"The people want the newspapers to tell the truth—they do not want to be lied to or lied about, and they will vote for anything that will force the newspapers to tell the truth. Give them a chance to vote on a bill making public utilities out of the newspapers and they will vote 90 to 10 in favor of it.

"With one morning and one evening newspaper in each city, controlled by the government and deleted of all

fakes, falsehoods and injurious reading matter, we would begin to appreciate public control of high and mighty corporations, rendering a public service."

Three years ago I would have laughed at this man. Today I am not even amused—I am impressed.

Newspaper men will laugh at him today. They feel secure. The very fact that they say "it cannot be done" is positive proof that they believe they are complete masters of the people and whosoever would take part in making them public service corporations.

Now please do not confuse this book as being a general attack on all newspapers. The vast majority of our papers try to be absolutely square and above board. They are just as anxious to be rid of the Yellow Backs as you are. They realize that their business is blackened just as much by unfair and crooked newspapers as yours is by unscrupulous and dishonest public utilities.

They are the newspapers to whom you owe your support. They are the only ones in which you can hope to secure gratifying results from honest, sane, constructive publicity and advertising. Enough for the newspapers. Now for my plea.

In reading this book, please have patience. Try and remember that I am not an author. I have merely set down here as I could think of them, some of my experiences in the newspaper and public service business, and what they have taught me.

Perfect continuity may be lacking. Probably I will not say things just as you would. And maybe you will not agree entirely with me. However, I sincerely believe that every public service man will find some profit in a perusal of its pages. I commit it to your tender mercy.

E. E. WAGNER.

Lambasting Public Service Corporations

CHAPTER I

The Dream

IT is an awful thing to blame God for things as they are.

To me, it has always been terrible for a mere human to sit in judgment on Him.

That is why I can hardly realize that these are my thoughts.

I am not sacrilegious. I am not a moral leper. Neither am I a liar nor a thief. I am not a menace to society.

If I am wrong in thinking as I do—I am sorry.

But sorry or not, it is beyond my ken to understand just why there was a Snake in the Garden of Eden.

Neither can I understand why two cold, limbless, terrifying Snakes were permitted to wriggle from the Ark.

But they were and all through the ages, in all climes, there have lived progeny of this pair, with sacks of poison in pointed fangs.

There has never been a good square sport among the bunch—unless it might be the rattler.

The bared foot of a child—the slender ankle of a maid—the careless foot of a peasant—all have been pierced, stung, seared, by these creeping reptiles.

But as civilization advanced; as blazed trails became

paved roads; as congested cities grew in the wilderness, the Snake crept away or was exterminated.

* * * * *

I now imagine that I am in the dwelling place of the Deity. God is reviewing the work of the Hand of Man.

"There is New York City," he says. "And Cleveland, and Cincinnati and Chicago." And he goes on naming a number of cities. "The Snakes I placed in those places are extinct. Man has transgressed my laws—has overshadowed my work. He has annihilated the Snakes I placed there."

Against my will, I am forced to believe that there was some good reason for placing Snakes on this earth. Else, why would they have been placed here?

So I imagine that He was angered when they were destroyed with abandon. Naturally a substitute had to be found—one which would go its slimy way destroying, stinging, spreading terror.

It must have been quite a job to create anything so loathsome that it could replace the Snake.

But finally the labor was finished.

The Yellow Newspaper was born.

The work was well done.

And now, give us back the slippery Snake of the wilderness. Let it crawl into the chimneys of our fireplaces if necessary—let it live in the sewers of our city by night and come forth in the light where we can see it and sidestep it if possible—let it be any place at any time, a danger to our bodies if it will save us from the stinking yellow poison decaying the minds of our children—of our people.

* * * * *

So I thought as I sat smoking before my warm fireplace.

These are the reasons:

Of all the men in all the world, none are so abused and maligned as the average public service corporation man. A murderer gets better treatment—kinder words—greater sympathy.

Just why this is true, is mystifying to most of them. A public service man isn't any different from any other man. He has two legs, two arms, a mouth, a nose, some ears and eyes and a heart. He may have curly hair or he may be bald. He may be a bachelor or he may be married and have nine children.

At any rate he is a human being in the business of serving the people to the best of his ability.

That he should always be cartooned as a bloated, red nosed, ponderous personage with a "\$" mark suit of clothes and the toe of his boot in the nether end of a little weazened-up cuss labeled "Common People" is beyond my reason.

But he is caricatured thusly and must suffer thereby.

Ancient Sport of Monopoly



The above is the type of cartoon that is very unfair to a public service corporation.

CHAPTER II

The Passing of Moses

JUST as malignant as some cartoons which sometimes appear in otherwise fair papers, are the attacks in the news and editorial columns of Yellow Back newspapers.

The Yellow Back does not give two whoops this side of perdition if a corporation is straight and is honestly furnishing a valuable service. Just as long as public utility corporations spend millions to serve the people and just as long as there are irresponsible Yellow Backs, just that long, I suppose, will corporations be the target of their ridicule and attack.

These convictions are the result of experience. I have worked on unfair newspapers. I have had my share of their columns in which to attack—to destroy. And I have harpooned, knifed and panned about every kind of corporation and corporation man in America.

And I thought I was doing a wonderful service. I have tried to run city hall, the gas company, the electric company, the trolley lines, railroads and kindred organizations.

Men feared the sight of me. In my own mind's picture I was a Moses leading the common people from the wilderness.

I didn't think there was an honest man in the world outside of myself and the workingman.

All persons who did not labor in factories and carry dinner pails were leeches sucking the life-blood from little children, anæmic girls and sturdy men.

Isn't it strange what fools we can make of ourselves? I now wonder that I kidded myself into believing I was such a marvel. But that is a habit with Yellow Back reporters. It is sort of a balm to their consciences.

Again now, do not misunderstand me. I do not mean to imply that every newspaper is a Yellow Back, and every reporter a crook. Neither do I want you to believe that every newspaper which has or will print attacks on corporations are Yellow Backs. Very often a paper is justified in attacking a corporation.

When I was a reporter, for some papers, I despised public service men—because I had to. I have written column after column of unfair and unverified copy about them.

Since my reporter days I have had opportunity of seeing the other side—of studying the habits and methods of public utilities. The revelation has been pleasantly astonishing.

If the American people were getting as square a deal from their newspapers, their politicians, their butcher, baker and candlestick maker, there would not be so many anarchists.

CHAPTER III

Editor Tries to Run Gas Company

BECAUSE I was once a newspaper man I am taken into the confidence of public service corporation men from many parts of the country, who tell me their tales of woe and ask the why for of Yellow Back attacks.

Some of these tales are interesting. They are worth repeating.

Some time ago a friend employed by a Gas Company was talking with me about advertising.

His company was spending a fair size appropriation in constructive publicity that was doing good. It was doing all the advertising it could honestly do.

But a Yellow Back in his city was not satisfied. It made its demands—diplomatic and inoffensive of course.

He held off.

The next day zero weather gripped the city. The utility organization labored valiantly in maintaining its service. No person suffered.

But the cringing Yellow Back cried "Gas Shortage." It tried to convince the people that there was a gas shortage and that the utility—in the business of selling gas, mark you—was actually doing all within its power to prevent them from getting gas, and for some unexplained reason was making them suffer.

The editor of the paper had been in the city for six months.

He had never worked for a gas company.

He knew absolutely nothing about the production, transportation and delivery of gas.

But in his columns he qualified as an expert.

He told how to prevent a gas shortage—that did not exist. “It can be done,” he said, “by drilling more wells.” Wonderful intelligence!

Reporters who were given the task of proving their editor’s statements telephoned hundreds of homes. They succeeded in corralling a few alleged complaints. No mention was made of those who commended the service.

“I cannot keep warm and I fear for the life of my baby who is ill,” one complainant was quoted.

The man had no baby.

“My house is like an icicle,” another was quoted. This particular person had been gone from the city for three years.

“We had to wear our coats in the house, we couldn’t get gas,” stated an employe of the paper.

He did not have a gas heating appliance. Neighbors had abundant gas.

Such was the proof. Such was the rot the paper fed its readers. They believed it, for how were they to know that their neighbors a few blocks away were not suffering.

Do you think that such publicity is of benefit to a city?

Do you think it helps a city for a newspaper to unjustly pan an industry that does more than any other single element for a city—merely because it is a public service corporation?

By the way, this particular paper pays a much greater per cent on the capital invested than most any other industry in the city.

It declares itself to be the protector and servant of the common people.

Some day some person is going to take such newspapers at their word and introduce a bill in the legislature to have newspapers made public service corporations.

Then watch them crawl.

At present such papers are the plunderers of the common people, the plunderers of their honest, trusting minds, and the plunderers of the youth, energy and impulsiveness of their reporters—most of whom are about 20 years old.

Most of these papers have reporters from 18 to 25 years old. Do you think boys of this age have experience enough to determine what kind of copy shall be fed to the poor suffering newspaper reader?

When you think of it, isn't it funny that a bunch of boys are permitted to run loose in our cities attacking honest industries almost at will—provided they are employed by a Yellow Back?

That is what hurts most. The attacks are written by impulsive boys, who believe they are doing right. They put real zest and genuine conviction into their stories for they believe what they write.

**Boost For Your
Own City; Boost
For Yourself!**

**Be a Builder!
Don't Destroy!
Help Build Your
City Bigger and
Better.**

Your City is Big—but not so big but what it can be boosted.

In Boosting Your City you are Boosting yourself—helping yourself.

And every time your Boosting grows a little tame, just remember—

Nothing will Harm or Dishonor Your Own City and Yourself more than Knocking.

Every time you hurt the name of Your City—Your Industries and Your own People—You are Keeping Good Industries and Good People away from Your City.

And while you are Boosting, think how you would be situated without Electric Service?

Nothing has done more for the prosperity—the Happiness—the Cleanliness and the Health of Your City than Electric Service.

More factories and more good people have been brought to Your City on account of Electric Service than any other simple element.

Hasn't Electric Service helped you?

The advertisement above is the type of advertisement that can often be used by utilities unjustly attacked. With few changes it will fit any utility.

CHAPTER IV

Frightening Industrials

I SHALL never forget an attack made on a public utility in a western city.

The company transported natural gas to this particular city in large quantities for domestic and industrial use.

During the first five years of its existence dozens of factories were drawn to the city by the gas service.

An unfair newspaper in the same city had brought none.

Without provocation the newspaper launched an attack on the corporation.

People were made to believe that the gas supply was failing—although it was as good as ever. Industrials became panic stricken; customers commenced throwing heating appliances from their homes and state and city investigations were started.

Since that time I have been reliably informed that many factories have abandoned plans of moving to this city, believing the gas supply was doomed. The factories had to depend on gas service.

The city in question is striving to reach a high population mark by 1920.

Do you think it will?

Neither do I.

And still the business men of that city have no yet been able to see how this one paper is damaging the

prosperity and growth of their city and thereby injuring their business.

If the utility would have gone to the ten largest retail firms in that city and shown them the number of factories and people that the newspaper had kept out of their city by its unfairness, I think they would have changed their opinion of this paper.

His Annual Promise



In a large American city last winter a gas company experienced some sudden field troubles. About 2,500 customers out of 180,000 had low pressure. "His Annual Promise" is one of the many cartoons appearing in a newspaper at that time.

CHAPTER V

Fake Meter Reader Thugs

THE flimsiest excuses are often used to attack public service corporations. Here is proof of it.

Not so very long ago a thug represented himself to a woman in a large city as an electric meter reader.

He gained entrance to the home and severely black-jacked her before ransacking the house.

The electric company was blameless.

But demands were made upon it by a newspaper to prevent similar attacks.

It was purely a matter for the police—but that made no difference.

By clever handling, the story shortly assumed large proportions—so large in fact that other newspapers had to take notice of it.

The climax was reached, I am reliably informed, when reporters from one of the papers tied a vaudeville actress over a piano, turned the flat topsy-turvy and printed a “fake meter reader” story.

Council then took hold of the matter, passed resolutions, held public indignation meetings and the Electric Company was called upon to protect its customers. You understand, of course, that the police department was not in the business of protecting the people from thugs. That unwarranted campaign cost the Electric Company thousands of dollars.

At the public Council meeting numerous women’s

clubs were represented by their officers, often publicity seekers. However, the president of the largest club of Jewish women refused the request of the newspaper to represent her club at the meeting. Consequently the newspaper secured a German cook and Swedish maid, from a Jewish home, to represent the club of Jewish women.

Another interesting case was that of a telephone company, attacked because it refused to take check reins off its horses.

The company's advertising manager suggested a full page advertisement, showing by a series of pictures how the aggressive paper distributed its wares in the downtown section.

He went so far as to secure the affidavit of a wagon driver who stated that the unfair paper killed one horse a month by forcing its men to constantly drive at break-neck speed.

But the advertisement never appeared.

Why?

If the utility would have succumbed to Yellow Back attack with advertising, I doubt if it would have had any future peace from similar ones. If a Yellow Back ever forces you to go to the people with any defensive advertisement it will be a pretty good plan not to run the copy in the Yellow Back columns.

A somewhat similar case is that of a street railway company.

They paid scrubwomen \$1.85 per night. I am told that a Yellow Back campaigned on this. The paper's scrubwomen received \$1.35 for a twelve hour night.

Another friend recently discontinued advertising in a Yellow Back when his company was attacked because it

earned \$1,400,000 last year on an investment of about \$32,000,000.

Here is part of the letter I received from him today.

“I have dared to defy The * * *. I have refused to spend money supporting it. Yesterday I received final notice to resume advertising. I refused. Today I am attacked—I am ridiculed—I am the victim of public ire, and distrust—unjustly aroused by false attacks and false statements of the paper.”

The Serpent had struck. It evidently hit him in a vital spot.

CHAPTER VI

Absurd Charges

ONE of the largest daily papers in America recently printed an inference that air was being mixed with the gas sold in that city.

If there is any one thing that is absurd, it is the charge of filling the pipe lines with air and gas.

First, it is a chemical impossibility. Air and gas will not mix. By constant stirring one can get a fair mixture of oil and water. But not so with gas and air.

But suppose gas and air would mix. Immediately you would have an explosive element. Some bright sunshiny day a little pebble rippling along in a pipe line would bump too hard against a joint, cause a spark and—Bang! Up in the air would go your pipe line, and most of your city.

Even granting that gas and air could be mixed and safely transported, it could not be done by merely pressing a button. There would have to be some place to force air into the lines.

This place could not be concealed. Air pumps cannot operate alone. Machinery is brainless. Some person would have to operate the pumps.

If I wanted to get rich quick and did not care how I accomplished it, nothing would please me any more than to be made the confidant of some public service corporation, foolish enough to try and be crooked.

Do you think that any newspaper would dare infer that air and gas were being mixed in the pipe lines, if the people knew that it was an impossibility?

The newspaper would not dare to make such a fool of itself.

Then, are you not to blame for such statements when you let them pass unchallenged? Are you not at fault for not using ordinary intelligence in anticipating such statements and thwarting them with advertisements similar to this:—

AN ABSURD IDEA

*It is a Chemical Impossibility
to Mix Air and Gas*

*Natural Gas is 40 Per Cent
Lighter Than Air*

This one statement should forever blot from your mind the absurd notion that air and gas can be mixed.

The activity of jokesmiths has led many persons to believe that air and gas will mix.

The fact that only jokesmiths make such statements should be positive proof of the foolishness of the statements.

Be a Builder!

Builders make Prosperity.

Honest People make Prosperity.

Money makes Prosperity.

And Prosperity is a paved road to Greatness.

That is why it pays to be a Builder.

First and to Builders is being given at America's
First Complete Building Show, now being held
in the Wigmore Coliseum.

It teaches how to build—how to be a Builder.

With other residents, we are proud of the
Show, proud of the Builders responsible for it.

Our pride is shared by 2,000 Honest and Loyal
men who help furnish you with the Cheap-
est and Best Gas Service in America.

And we know that you, too, will be proud of the
show when you pay it a visit and see the won-
ders there.

When you are deep among the exhibits picking
out your model home—

And while you are Thinking and Talking "Build-
ing," do not forget—

No home is Comfortable, no home is Convenient,
no home is Complete without Ample provision
for Gas Lighting, Cooking and Heating Service.

Our experts will advise you Free how to provide
for the Gas Service you want and will need in
the new home you decide upon—whether it be
cottage or mansion.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CURRENT EVENTS

*If you are a wide-awake
advertiser you will take
advantage of current
events to make your copy
more valuable and inter-
esting.*

*For instance, there was
a mammoth building show
in a large American city
last winter. Through ex-
tensive advertising and
publicity the managers of
the show had interested
thousands of people.*

*A gas company seized
this opportunity for some
valuable advertising. The
company had been severe-
ly and unfairly criticized
just before the show. The
line "BE A BUILDER"
on the accompanying ad-
vertisement is much
stronger than if the com-
pany had said "DO NOT
BE A KNOCKER."*

CHAPTER VII

Yellow Backs Play Safe

The safest and favorite way pursued by Yellow Backs in attacking public service corporations is through ward heeling, peanut cracking, black-leg, nondescript politicians.

Practically every large city—and many smaller ones—have several men in public office who make a stab for popularity by attacks on public service corporations.

They believe that every assault is one more brick in their paved road to re-election. They are the tools of the Yellow Backs.

Here is the way the counterfeit public official and the Yellow Back usually work together :

The Yellow Back reporter abhors public service corporations. He dislikes them because he is taught to and because it pays him to do so. He can usually get by the city editor with a story rapping a corporation. To laud would be flirting with discharge.

Imagine a Yellow Back reporter sitting in his dingy city hall office reading the morning paper. What is this he sees? The Infallible Gas Company is building a new \$300,000 pumping station.

Clip, clip, go the shears. Straight to a publicity seeking official he goes. He finds him in his office next door to the city chemist's laboratory.

"Did you see this?" he asks, as he hands the official the clipping.

"Yeh, yeh, ain't that awful?" the official answers, who has not seen the story.

"S'pose it's to pump more air into the gas?" the reporter inquires.

"I s'pose so," answers the official, as he reads the clipping.

"Whatcha gonna do about it?" the reporter asks.

"You just watch me," the official answers. "I am just waiting for the next board meeting to introduce a resolution asking for an investigation, to learn whether or not those pumps are to be used to force more air into the gas."

Here is your story. It will carry startling headlines and will commence something like this:

Council will be asked Wednesday night to investigate the purpose of The Infallible Gas Company in purchasing a battery of new pumps. Alderman Fool will introduce the resolution.

"There is a growing opinion that the Gas Company is mixing larger quantities of air with the gas than usual," said Alderman Fool. "The time is here for the Board to do something, and not after the people have been forced to pay for a lot of excess air."

For probably a half column the reporter will ramble. The people will read every word of it and will believe it.

If the reporter and official would have stepped through the door into the chemical laboratory, the chemist would have told them that a daily analysis of the gas showed it to be free from air and several hundred heat units richer in quality than required by ordinance.

The Gas Company usually ignores such charges. It seldom gets an opportunity to refute them and probably would not dare to if given a chance.

* * * * *

Once in awhile there is humor in such attacks, as witness the case of a rising young politician who occupied a very important position in a city where I once worked on a newspaper. He was intelligent and well educated, but had an insatiable egoism.

His favorite method of satisfying his excessive love for himself was by seeing his name in the newspapers. To be able to do this he was constantly assailing public service corporations. He never failed a chance to capitalize the rather general distrust and dislike of corporations, due to unfair attacks, and he was a wizard at creating opportunities to attack.

In his scramble for cheap publicity he apparently would say or do anything a reporter asked him to do. Finally his foot slipped. He made a fool of himself. This is the way he did it.

Several schools were closed one Zero Day because it was impossible to heat them. A newspaper carried a front page story with big headlines.

"Mr. So-and-So is going to start an immediate investigation to see why the pressure of gas is so low the schools cannot be heated," the story commenced, to the best of my recollection. The man was given a half column in which to air his views.

On the opposite side of the page another scare head carried a gas explosion story.

“Mr. So-and-So is going to start an immediate investigation to see why the pressure of gas is too high,” the story commenced, as I remember it. “He believes that the explosion which snuffed out several lives this morning was due to high gas pressure.”

Can you beat it?

CHAPTER VIII

Charitable Ogranizations Unfair

EVEN some charitable organizations make common prey of public utilities.

They do it despite the fact that corporations are the most cheerful and most benevolent of all donors to charity.

I do not believe there is a gas or electric company in America that does not carry accounts on their books for months, at the request of charitable institutions.

Still, these same corporations are often used as a crow-bar by charity organizations to pry money from the public.

It is done in the most abominable way. Press agents for charitable bodies are largely responsible.

Such a press agent recently took a story to the city editor of a large American daily. There was a tear in every line of the yarn. This is the lead:

"Mary ——, sixteen, slowly counted her pennies.

"Only 69 and the light bill was \$1.80.

"As she reviewed her sad plight there came a pounding on the door.

"It was the light collector.

"Mary could only beg him not to turn off the light.

"The 69 pennies must buy bread for her three brothers and two sisters. It could not be used to pay light bills.

“Mary’s father died two years ago. Her mother disappeared last week. She is trying to keep the little brood together, hoping that mother will return.

“There are hundreds of other cases similar to this that need immediate **help.**”

The charitable organization then made an appeal for money.

As a matter of fact Mary’s account was 40 cents ; her bill was not yet due and at the light company’s office there was a deposit of \$5.00 that Mary’s father had placed there long before his death, as security for light bills.

When the above story was written the light company was carrying \$20,000 in back accounts at the request of the charity organization.

Clean Up and Keep Clean--With Gas

You can help to *clean up* Your City and keep it clean—by using electricity.

Electric Service doesn't have to be hauled ; it doesn't have to be handled.

It doesn't submit you—or the city—to an endless task of cleaning and sweeping.

No dust, no dirt, no soot.

Electric service never soils your rugs or curtains ; it never dirties houses or streets.

It's the *cleanest* light—and it's also the most *economical*.

Clean up—and keep clean—with Electric Service.

News, April 19.

CLEAN-UP WEEK POSSIBILITIES

Once each spring in nearly every American city there is observed a "Clean-Up" week.

Usually the mayor of the city issues a "Clean-Up" proclamation.

It offers a wonderful opportunity for all kinds of public utilities to print combination good-will and sales copy advertisement, as shown above and on the opposite page.

In case there is no "Clean-Up" week in your city at present, why do you not promote such a week?

It would more than pay you in good-will and increased business.



Don't Sweep, Scrub Dust and Drudge!

Some folks Sweep, Scrub, Dust and Drudge
to Keep Clean.

Others keep their homes Clean and Com-
fortable with Gas Service—which is as
Cheap or Cheaper than other fuels.

Gas Heating Installations may be made
now—under our easy payment plan.

Enjoy its Cleanliness and Comfort during
chill spring and be prepared next Fall.

Call or write now for full information.

NAME OF GAS COMPANY



CHAPTER IX

Benefits Derived from Unfair Stories

JUST what benefits accrue from such stories? Here are some:

They keep good people away from a city.

They prevent an harmonious relation between a corporation and the public.

They foment hatred and spitefulness—negative fancies that promote discontent.

They blacken the name of a city, and—

They keep capital and builders out of a city—out of a state.

And much of the fault for these attacks lie with public service corporations—and those public service men who have not had the time or inclination to give these matters the thought and attention they deserve.

In days gone by nearly every public service corporation looked upon its advertising department as a necessary evil—so I am told. Many of them still view it that way.

Others believe that any person can write advertisements.

The average corporation did little advertising except when assailed. Then the money was thrown to the winds in page and half page advertisements.

Briefly, the public service corporations considered their advertising appropriation as a big bone to throw to hungry dogs—(the newspapers)—to keep them from sinking their yellow fangs too deep in the corporation leg.

Unscrupulous newspapers, always hungry, were quick to capitalize this misdirected expenditure of advertising money and attacks became more frequent and were made on the flimsiest excuse.

The public service corporations had placed the cart before the horse and they were paying a fancy price.

They were giving advertising to Yellow Back newspapers to get a square deal instead of going to the people with honest appeal advertising in newspapers that were giving them a square deal.

It was a case of the paper that attacked hardest and oftenest being given the largest amount of advertising.

But conditions have rapidly improved and will continue to improve.

Public utilities must lose their fear of Yellow Backs.

They must realize the value of steady year-in-and-year-out advertising in honest, constructive, sane newspapers.

They must appreciate the vast power of "reason why" advertising copy. And they must understand that the oftener this copy is run the better.

When the corporations come to a full realization of the value of advertising and the advisability of going straight to the public with their problems and openly asking for co-operation, then I believe they can safely sit back and laugh at the Yellow Backs.

A good beginning would be a mammoth national propaganda to erase the many fallacious beliefs planted by Yellow Backs, that gas companies mix air with gas; that street railway companies do not care how many chil-

dren they kill; that railroads do nothing but water stock, and that light meters are little devils marking up twice the amount of electricity used, etc.

* * * * *

Please do not think that public service corporations want to run the newspapers.

They have better sense.

And do not charge them with wanting to muzzle the newspapers and stop them from printing news.

They have better sense.

If they neglect their service, if they turn crooked, if they do anything to hinder service, to injure the people, the sooner and harder they are attacked the better for them and for all of us.

Their very existence depends on their square dealing in all things. There are too many eyes focused on them to make it safe to resort to dishonest business methods—such as Yellow Backs employ.

From the minute a man enters the service of a utility he is taught to walk on top of the table and spread a little sand around to keep from slipping.

He WANTS to be square. He MUST be square.

And he has the right to demand square treatment in return.

He does not want the deal he is now getting.

CHAPTER X

The Biggest Goat of All

MAYBE you think I am a wealthy man, with investments in public utilities. I am not. I haven't a cent invested any place and for all I know my check account may be overdrawn this minute. If it isn't it would not take a very big check to deplete what there is in the bank.

But if I did have money and was looking for an investment the last thing on God's dirt that would attract me would be the average public utility. And especially an illuminating company investment.

Of all the utilities serving the public, electric companies right now are getting the most unfair treatment of all. For several years I had an opportunity to observe one of the most dastardly attacks on an illuminating company that was ever perpetrated. To some extent I took part in it.

The object of the attack was to sell the people a several million dollar bond issue to install a municipal light plant.

As usual the attack was lead by a newspaper. It fooled the people very easily. But in fairness to the public I know that right now they are questioning the veracity of this paper. They are commencing to realize that someone has fooled them. And there is a changing sentiment toward the electric company—sort of a confidence, as it were.

In this case as in most attacks on illuminating companies the hue and cry of the newspapers has been "exces-

sive rates and watered stocks." It has printed columns of copy about "big dividends," "watered stock," etc.

This particular angle is usually the key to an entire campaign to destroy a public utility company.

Utility men deny the charges until they are black and blue in the face—among themselves.

They will tell each other how the public utilities commission investigated their company, their books and all that they possess and how it was proven that they were only earning 7 per cent on their investment.

But the newspaper goes on alleging that the company is paying usurious interest on their investment.

And the utility men will again commence denying and making counter allegations—among themselves.

Meanwhile the public goes on reading about "watered stock" and "big interest" and the public service corporation men remain deaf, dumb and stone blind—except when among themselves.

For the life of me I cannot see what they are afraid of. I can't see why they should be afraid to tell the public the truth if they are right. They surely have nothing to fear from the unfair newspaper. And while they are telling the public the truth they might make a comparison between their investment and the particular investment of the unfair newspaper. And they might also show the interest that each makes. In most instances the comparison would be mighty odious to the newspaper. They must stop yielding to their better judgment and becoming puppets of Yellow Backs by allowing money to be extorted from them.

Public utilities know these habits of Yellow Backs. And still they go blindly ahead paying no heed to what the future holds. The newspaper keeps pounding away

until there is suddenly born some day a general hatred and distrust of the utility.

Comes now a bright politician on the scene. He is seeking an important political office. Possibly he wants to be mayor. He immediately seizes upon this hatred, capitalizes it and rides into office on a Public Ownership platform.

Blame no one but the utility. It did not believe in advertising or publicity. It tried in no way to get the friendship of its patrons and scoffed at public confidences

I am reprinting on the following pages two advertisements recently printed in the dailies of a large American city. By reading it you can see how some public utilities are anticipating problems of the future and forestalling unfair attacks and criticisms.



\$119,000,000 Annually Is Paid Out In Wages

to an army of 150,000 employees of the New York Central Lines. The buying power of these employees contributes in a large part to the prosperity of the country served by the

New York Central Lines

*New York Central R. R.
"The Water-Level Route"*

But affecting such prosperity in even a greater measure than this vast disbursement for wages, together with other great sums for taxes and supplies, is the maintenance of the high standard of transportation service necessary to such growing communities as these lines serve.

That standard can be maintained only when there is a proper relation between earnings and expenses. In the correct solution of this problem the public and the railroads have a mutual interest—the prosperity of both is at stake.



For the Public Service

The picture alone in the above advertisement tells a big story and incites the imagination to action. It is valuable good-will copy.

Profit and Loss in Gas Service

You are a patron of Gas Service.

But do you know whether or not you are paying the Gas Company a fair profit for the comforts and conveniences you enjoy?

This may sound strange, but during the month of June 123,474 local families did not pay for the cost of furnishing them with gas.

18,671 families just about paid for the cost of their service. 51,286 families paid a reasonable profit, partially helping to overcome the mammoth deficit on the 123,474 families.

The gas consumption in this city during June is shown in this table:—

11,000 families used less than 100 cubic feet of gas.

19,536 families used 1,000 feet or less.

32,876 families used 2,000 feet or less.

33,584 families used 3,000 feet or less.

26,470 families used 4,000 feet or less.

123,474 families used less than 4,000 feet of gas.

Each one of the 123,474 families listed above secured their gas service at a loss to the Gas Company.

Here is the explanation:

It costs 60 cents each month to serve each gas customer before a foot of gas is used. This is called overhead. It includes office rent, clerk hire, meter reading, taxes, stationery, postage, printing, collecting, free service, etc.—in fact every cost connected with securing, transporting and delivering natural gas. It does not include interest on an investment exceeding \$50,000.00, or the price we must pay for gas.

Each 1,000 feet of gas purchased at the Ohio River now costs us 15 cents—next year it will cost 17½ cents.

Add 60 cents overhead to the present 15-cent price and you get 75 cents, the actual cost of furnishing you the first thousand feet of gas you use. You pay 30 cents for it. It costs 90 cents to furnish you 2,000 feet and you pay 60 cents.

It costs \$1.05 to furnish you 3,000 feet and you pay 90 cents.

It costs \$1.20 to furnish you 4,000 feet and you pay \$1.20.

During the month of June, 51,286 local families used from six to thirty thousand cubic feet of gas, helping to meet the mammoth deficit on our other customers.

The above statement is made to enlighten you concerning the conduct of a business that is often misunderstood by well meaning people.

CHAPTER XI

Meeting Yellow Back Oppression With Advertising

IN one large American city right now the illuminating company is on its knees begging for permission to make $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent on its investment. Its pleas are heard in every corner of the country.

An unfair newspaper placed it there in the dust with the old stereotyped charges of watered stock, big earnings, etc. And that newspaper has been earning 5 per cent a month net or 60 per cent a year on its investment and has retired all its bonds.

If any person, any place, can give me one good reason why the illuminating company attacked should not have printed the facts regarding its investments and earnings, I'll drop advertising and publicity work tomorrow and go into the junk business. In running such an advertisement I would even be tempted to print a comparison between the investments and earnings of the utility and newspaper. Also the taxes paid by each.

Such an advertisement, properly presented, would have placed the newspaper on the defensive so quickly that it never would have dared to mention "watered stock" and "high interest" again. If it did, the advertisement could have been repeated.

Such papers have absolutely no sense of justice. They ignore entirely the fact that a utility cannot place a valuation on its own service and sell it for what it is worth—like the merchant does.

They do not give two whoops this side of Perdition about the tremendous hazard involved in the operation of an electric plant or any other utility. It does not concern them that the heavy degree of depreciation and obsolescence in an illuminating company plant is alone almost as dangerous as the overhanging clouds of municipal ownership. Neither do they consider damages from accident, fire, flood and storm.

All they do think about is trying to appear as a friend of the people by putting out of business a corporation not overly popular with the people, and they don't care how they do it.

In supporting a bond issue for erection of a municipal lighting plant I am reliably told that this paper made 67 distinct libelous statements against the utility—every one an ignoble, filthy lie. And in most cases the newspaper was apprised of the truth before publication of the stories.

And the kind, complaisant utility, with nothing at stake but its plant and an investment of millions of dollars, permitted the newspaper to continue. What did it care with a little thing like its plant and investment at stake.

CHAPTER XII

Meeting Oppression With Anger

IN direct contrast to the silent utility is the one which is constantly rushing into print and making a scrap out of anything and everything said about it. The utility means all right, but does not seem to know just what to say, how to say it, or when to say it. It thinks that the newspaper has said something nasty about it and that it should immediately try to convince the public differently. Usually it only succeeds in increasing the value of the newspaper stories about a thousandfold.

Listen! This is important. Study these words:

A man cannot shadow box all night. Even though he could an audience would not sit all night and watch him. But if someone would step into the ring with him the audience would stay until doomsday.

Now if that man who jumps into the ring is placed on the defensive the audience will be against him. But if he places his adversary on the defensive the audience will be with him. Now then, here is your unfair newspaper shadow boxing. You rush into the ring without training or preparation. He is an adept—you are a novice. Good night! You will take the count sure.

Keep out of all scraps where you will be placed on the defensive. Keep silent if you cannot lead the fight.

If I were a public service company and attacked by a newspaper trying to further its own ends by promoting a bond issue and municipal ownership, this is what I would do.

First, I would go to the editor. I would try to convince him of his wrong. Failing in this I would serve notice that he would either tell the strict truth or prepare for the worst licking he ever received.

And I would stick to my word. I would force him to tell the truth or know the reason why.

* * * * *

Remember now, I would try every way to avert a fight. But when the clash did come I would refuse to see or talk with a reporter from the Yellow Back paper. If I did, I would make it a point to have a stenographer to take down every word uttered.

So far as newspaper advertising is concerned I would run constructive copy in all papers except the Yellow Back. I would tell how much money I had invested; the number of persons in my employ and the number of children, widows and mothers supported by them. I would also run pictures of the oldest employees and all human interest copy of a similar nature that I could discover. I would not publicly refer to the bond issue in any way whatsoever until the day before election. Then I would make my bow in the evening papers with a full page, two page or dozen page advertisement. I would explain my business, tell my problems and make my appeal. And I would conclude something like this:

“For the past six months The Bugle has been waging a campaign for a bond issue of \$7,000,000 to erect a municipal light plant.

“It has made 67 libelous statements in trying to convince you of the necessity for a municipal plant. In most of these cases it knew the truth before publishing the statements.

"For the past 24 years we have tried to serve you faithfully and honestly. We have earned a fair interest on our investment.

"For the municipality and ourselves to be in competition will be ruinous to both.

"We have a plant costing \$32,000,000.

"It is probably the best equipped and best operated in America.

"If you believe that your city will save money or make money by operating its own plant you will act accordingly.

"We do not think it can. We base our contention on our experience and the showing of municipally owned illuminating plants in hundreds of cities throughout the United States.

"If you really believe you want your own light plant, that you want to add \$7,000,000 to your total municipal debt of \$67,000,000, that it will be properly maintained and will not become a political football, we will save you money by selling you our plant for its true appraised value, plus 10 per cent.

"We know there is not room for two electric light plants whose rates are as low as ours, and we are perfectly willing to sell out at an honest price."

I'll bet the reply of the people to such an advertisement would be overwhelming defeat of the proposed bond issue.

Now remember, in writing this I am taking it for granted that you belong to the majority of utilities that are not earning a fair per cent on their investment.

If you are earning 60 per cent like the Yellow Back

described, then it would be foolish to make such an offer. It might be accepted.

I do not know that such tactics have ever been employed. I know of no precedent to say they are right or wrong. But it sounds like horse sense to me. Maybe you disagree. If so, you may be right and I may be wrong. But I would stake my life on such procedure.

The newspapers, of course, have a very unfair advantage in such crusades. They have to pay nothing for their space. Their advertisers pay their way. But the utility has to buy its space and it usually has to buy in every paper in town, and in large enough space to be seen and heard.

Then, too, the newspapers employ trained men—trained in the art of effective publicity. They know just what to do and how to do it. They know just what to say and when to say it.

There is something mysterious about the newspaper profession—something which is baffling to most corporation men. That is the reason why it pays to have a man at your elbow who knows something about newspaper, publicity and advertising work. But when you get one, be sure that he knows his business—that he is not merely a cub with little or no experience. And then do not try to keep information from him. If he does not know your exact condition and problems, how in Heaven's name can you expect him to know what to say?

Most public service men think a publicist is some sort of a fairy person with enchanting words who can write spellbinding copy about nothing. He isn't. He is merely a specialist, a student of humanity no doubt and no more able to perform miracles than you are. He is a sentiment engineer and if wise will go about building a bridge

of sentiment between your office and your customers' homes, the same way that a different kind of engineer would go about building a bridge across the Mississippi. But you must tell him your exact condition and what you want to accomplish. You must give him the tools and materials with which to work.

CHAPTER XIII

The Dawn of a New Day

SEVERAL men and several publications in America are doing a wonderful work right at the present time, in educating public service men not to fear Yellow Back newspapers. These men and these publications are bearing most of the burden of this missionary work, and are stripping the newspaper profession of its mystery. The results so far have been miraculous.

Chief among these men and these publications is J. B. Wootan, managing editor of Public Service. I asked Mr. Wootan to write me a short article telling what he considered the most unfair criticism against public service corporations and the proper way of meeting it. He responded with this article:

THE MOST UNFAIR ATTACK

(By J. B. Wootan)

The most unfair general attack made by newspapers against illuminating companies is the charge of excessive rates of return on the investment. The proper way to eradicate the evil is relentless publicity of the *facts*.

The statement is freely made that illuminating companies as a rule are earning not less than 8% on their investment and the talk of "watered stock" is still heard in some quarters. Ill-founded as these representations are, their persistent repetition constitutes the most unfair attack made against these companies. They furnish the basis for most of the trouble imposed upon the investment. They ignore the fact that communities today do not as a

rule permit the utility company to furnish its own rate of return; they also ignore the fact of the tremendous hazard involved in the operation of an electric light plant. Among the elements of this hazard are, of course, the heavy degree of depreciation and obsolescence; damages from accident, not to speak of fire, flood and storm and the ever-present possibility of municipal ownership.

Public control and regulation of public utilities has come to stay, and that too with the cordial approval and co-operation of the public utility. But to be most effective, it must be most fair. There is no reason why such an investment should be denied the right of a fair margin of profit the same as any other character of investment. The fact that the utility is given a franchise by the community does not alter this in the least. This very franchise which clothes the city with power to regulate, likewise imposes upon the city the obligation to protect. It is distinctly mutual in its motive and purpose. But in the franchise the utility enjoys certain privileges such as the use of the streets for its main lines of conduits. True, but for what purpose other than to serve the people—public service? The utility enjoys no monopoly in the use of the streets even though it has this franchise. Every merchant and newspaper in the city uses the streets for every purpose it may desire.

There comes to mind at this point a certain city in which the illuminating companies have asked the authorities for the right to earn $7\frac{1}{2}\%$ on their actual investment. In this same city one of the newspapers—a splendid institution, has been earning 5% a month net or 60% a year on its investment, having been able to retire its bonds. No one is denouncing this paper for its great prosperity. It seems to be very popular and influential. Its neighbors seem very proud of its remarkable success.

Nor is anyone suggesting that it would be fair for any public service corporation to earn such a profit as this. But at the same time, it is extremely unfair and harmful to misrepresent and hold up to public contumely the earnings of an illuminating company or any other public utility simply because it may seem popular to do so.

The state can make all sorts of laws to regulate vested capital, but the state cannot make a law to compel a man to invest his money. Advocates of drastic and multiple regulation seem to overlook this important point. There is an old saying that "capital is timid." But those who have observed the trend of legislation affecting investments must find this hard to appreciate. There is nothing timid about capital when it will persist in venturing up a dark alley, knowing that at the other end stands a big fellow with a dangerous bludgeon.

The astonishing fact is that public utilities have succeeded as well as they have in financing themselves under conditions, which have been anything but encouraging to capital. Few more important propositions confront us than fair regulation of these interests and the most vital thing about fair regulation is the proper appeal to the capital, without which public utilities cannot exist. If this appeal is to be heard, then we shall have to stop making public utilities the football of cheap and unscrupulous politics and the hobgoblin of socialism.

Socialism insists upon the "producer" sharing generously in the products of his labor. By "producer" is meant the wage-earning workman. Very well, then socialism ought to understand that without investment there can be no production and that the so-called "producer" above all, should do all he can to give investment a square deal; to create and maintain conditions that will inspire investment and enable it to do its best.

The whole thing, in short, comes down to the matter of mutual interest between all elements. That is far more important than the selfish interest of any individual or set of individuals, who are preying upon the credulity of the mass and the power of the class for their own unscrupulous ends.

CHAPTER XIV

Former Newspaper Editor Gives Advice

AMONG gas companies at least, wonderful results are being accomplished by *The Gas Record*.

Mr. Milt Saul, its editor, was formerly a newspaper man and publicist for large utility corporations.

For that reason there is reprinted here a valuable and interesting article by Mr Saul:

THE MOST UNFAIR CRITICISM

By Milt Saul, Editor The Gas Record

The political demagogue's favorite phrase, "soulless corporation," has been taken from him. No more do we hear from his frothing lips the old slogan of war: "Put me in office and I'll save you from the octopus!" The gentle art of publicity has educated his constituency out of range of such weapons.

Gone, too, are the familiar old terms "exorbitant rates," "set of thieves," "owns the council," "political fixers," and the like. The institution of public service commissions and special authorities with power to investigate rates, together with the glare of publicity thrown upon the so-called sources of these complimentary bouquets, not only effaced the guilty but served to create a widespread impression that all public service companies now regard commercial honesty and the political square deal as the best business policy.

What feature of public utility service remains, then, open to criticism, fair or unfair?

It is the character of the service performed.

Without doubt there is yet room for improvement in this department, but there is on the other hand more unfair criticism against the public service companies on this subject than perhaps on any other phase of their activities. The public has been led to believe that nothing short of perfection is permissible in public service, and no thought apparently is taken of the ever present human element in the administration and execution of this service, or of the fact that there is a limit to human capacity. Criticism, public at times but far more prevalent in the family circle and among individuals of a neighborhood, is therefore at large like the germs of a fever, and very often it is quite as contagious and just as harmful to its victims.

We still have with us the individual who loudly proclaims that his gas, electric or transportation service is "the limit." We will never quite satisfy him or his kind, of course. He goes about with a perpetual grouch against us. He is the individual to whom a popular contemporary cartoonist refers as "the terrible tempered Mr. Bang," and there are many of him. His influence is as wide as his prejudice is strong. The burden of his unfair strictures and the material consequences of his crusades, while they do not show in the newspapers, are very definite in the aggregate and they show very conspicuously in the company's cash books and ledgers.

Criticisms of this character are unfair because they strike at individuals just as earnest and just as energetic, yet just as fallible as "the terrible tempered Mr. Bang." When he goes about with his loose complaints and his street-car chatter and his sidewalk gossip and his thirst for vengeance just because his lights were not repaired the minute he found they were defective, he may not

realize it but the individual responsible for the delay may be a faithful employee with a large family whose apparent fault was due to illness, or to some minor mistake that all humans are liable to make.

It does not occur to the terrible tempered one that his activities may cost this employee his job and entail suffering upon the wife and children. He does not pause to reflect that possibly the one whose mistake caused his inconvenience sits regularly through the long watches of the night, waiting the call to service, and that over-fatigue may have caused a mistake. He may not, yet he should know, that a public service company employs none but the most capable and efficient men obtainable to render service to the homes and business institutions of their community, and that when an error is committed it is usually quite as excusable as the errors all of us make, even in the best regulated families. He may not know it and he may not care, but nevertheless he is guilty of a serious offense. He is undermining our character as a public servant, and it isn't fair.

What is the remedy for the contagious criticisms of the terrible tempered Mr. Bangses?

It is the same medicine that has cured our former ills. It is publicity.

Mr. Bang and his neighbors must be informed of the type of men we employ to render our service to the public. They must be told of the numbers we employ, the sums we spend in wages, the precautions we take at great expense to prevent mistakes and to make our service as near perfect as it is possible to make it.

We can at least inform the neighbors, and then when Mr. Bang comes along with his great grouch he will not find so many others ready to listen to him.

There is no antidote for unfair criticism, public or private, so effective as wide-spread information. Facts, in large doses, will cure the most malignant contagion of unfair complaint.

CHAPTER XV

Passing the Buck

MAYBE I am wrong, but of all public utilities in America today, I believe the street railway companies are least molested.

And probably the first real big fight ever waged against a public utility by a municipality was against a street railway company.

Again I may be wrong, but from talking with newspaper men, politicians and others on the inside, I believe the reason for this is that municipal politicians realized that they were taking a bigger bite than they could swallow, when they started attacks on street railway companies.

Said the politician to himself: "I am making an ass of myself in trying to keep up a system of wires, tracks, schedules, power stations, rolling stock and handle rush crowds one hour and laggards another, when I can make just as big a hit with the people by assailing the illuminating company where there are only wires and power plants to maintain."

Sounds simple, but I really believe that was the birth of the avalanche of attacks on illuminating companies.

I do not mean to imply that the street railways have a soft snap. They haven't. But there is one advantage that the street railway company has over another utility. If a man does not get a seat he is angry with the man who did get one and blames him, whereas if a customer does

not get gas or electricity or water he blames the utility serving him. He does not blame his neighbor.

Much of the criticism against street railways arises from condition of pavements and torn up streets. And in a majority of the cases the utility is blameless.

Such criticism usually results in this way:

February 1, the city orders the railway company to have its pavement torn up in a certain section, so that sewer pipes may be laid April 1st.

April 1, pavement is torn up.

April 2, criticism commences.

April 3, newspaper stories appear.

April 4-April 30, newspaper criticism continues.

May 1, city commences laying sewer.

The city is to blame—the railway company suffers the criticism.

Then again in most cities railway companies are forced to keep the pavement between their tracks in good repair.

In a city I know of a railway company was recently ordered to repair 140 holes in a system with 300 miles of tracks.

The streets in the city were in terrible condition. Cartoons appeared daily with captions, "Crossing the Alps in Nth street." The cartoonist would show a motorist bouncing from one pavement rut to another.

Newspaper reporters were sent to the city hall to go after officials. Then commenced the work of passing the buck.

"Yes, the pavements are in bad shape," officials admitted. "We have been investigating condition of the streets for several weeks and have ordered the street railway company to make repairs immediately." As a matter of fact the railway company was ordered to pave 140 holes in 300 miles of tracks or about one hole in every two miles. The officials got away with it, quietly started some repair work of their own and by passing the buck, escaped criticism. The street railway company was showered with enough brickbats to pave a thousand ruts. It is a great game.

As I said before, the passenger who does not get a seat seldom raves about the railway company. We now come to the passenger who must wait unduly long for a car.

I know of a certain city where the car service was unusually poor. Criticism was heaped upon the railway company from every source. And as usual the city officials and the police were at fault.

There was a great deal of slow vehicle traffic in this city. Wagon drivers were in the habit of driving in the tracks and no amount of gonging would get them out until they were ready.

There were cases where cars were delayed as high as 32 minutes. And all the time the street railway company was getting the blame.

Finally the street car company screwed up enough courage to go to the city hall and demand enforcement of an ordinance prohibiting such acts on the part of slow vehicle drivers. For years the police and city hall had not been enforcing the ordinances and the street car company had borne in silence the blame for poor service.

When they demanded it, the ordinance was enforced, offenders were arrested and fined, and today the railway company maintains excellent service and complaints are isolated. The remedy was simple, easily applied and the results wonderful.

And still today there are cities, and good sized ones too, where schedules are literally shot to pieces by such tactics and for some inconceivable reason nothing is done to correct the evil.

CHAPTER XVI

Telephone Companies in Clover

IF this book would have been written five years ago we could have said a lot about telephone companies.

There is a little to say today. Compared to other utilities they are in clover.

And it is due to their own good judgment that they are there. The national publicity of the Bell Telephone Company has practically wiped out all adverse sentiment against telephone companies as a whole.

The bigger systems have aided greatly by requiring their help to always be courteous and considerate. I'll wager that practically every telephone company employe says "thank you" and "please" one thousand times each day. It would not do any injury for all employes of utilities to follow suit.

A majority of telephone kickers today, and there are few of them, live on party lines, where it is sometimes difficult to get service when you want it. Usually then the customer vents his rage on the poor telephone central or the neighbor who is using the phone. Telephone companies have nearly solved their problems. They occupy an enviable position.

* * * * *

I am going to take advantage of this opportunity to say something about courtesy. A few months ago the president of a public service corporation asked me to write him some advertisements dealing with courtesy.

After spending one week in studying his problems and standing in the handsome lobby of his building, I went to his office and said:

“Pay me the money and put me on a job where I can meet your customers and show them courtesy and I will make more friends in one day than we can make in a month through advertising courtesy. It would be suicide to try to make friends through advertising with the bunch you now have waiting on the people.”

Orders were immediately issued requiring every employee to say “Please” when making a request to a customer. They were also required to say “Thank you” when a request was complied with or bills were paid.

They were first made to know that the Company appreciated them and expected them to show appreciation to their customers. Reciprocity is a natural law that cannot be denied and the customers were quick to respond to courteous, appreciative treatment. Today that public service corporation is actually popular and there is not a yellow newspaper existing which would dare to make an attack upon it.

In this case, as in all cases, the poor, suffering people merely wanted the corporation to show them courtesy and cater to them. They appreciated the Company’s service and its product, but they did miss courteous treatment and some display of appreciation on the part of the corporation employees.

It is unnecessary to go into a long discourse for every person knows what courtesy is and how to be courteous. If you have an employee who does not know, you better get rid of him quick. However, I would require every employee to show strict observance of these three rules:

One: Overlook all rudeness and unkindness in customers.

Two: Be kind.

Three: Greet the customer when he enters and say "Good Bye" when he leaves.

It will not injure a corporation or a corporations's morals for employees to show the same spirit toward one another that they are required to show toward customers.

YOUR BABY



Better Baby Week is Here.
It is time to study Baby's needs—to solve
Baby problems.

Better Babies—Stronger Babies is the object.
The Federation of Women's Clubs is Boosting
the movement in Greater Cleveland

The Woman's Exposition in Wigmore Coliseum
will have special sessions and educational ex-
hibits, for Mothers.

Enlisted in the cause are physicians, nurses,
schoolteachers and the city administration.
Let every person in Greater Cleveland lend
their support and—Boom the Babies.

It is the privilege of The East Ohio Gas Com-
pany to keep Thousands of Babies warm—to
heat the water for their baths.
Mothers like the Comforts and Conveniences of
Gas Service.

They enjoy the Time it gives them with Baby.
They appreciate its Cleanliness—its Economy.
They value the Protection it gives Baby for—
Baby's Health is Cleveland's Wealth.

A visit to our new display room will show you
various gas appliances in operation.
If you cannot come, call or write our "Good
Service" Department for information on House
Heating. If you wish, a man will call at your
home.

BABY WEEK OPPOR- TUNITIES

*Every year the entire
country observes Better
Baby Week.*

*It offers wonderful op-
portunities for gas and
electric companies to se-
cure valuable good-will
and sales publicity.*

*The manner in which
one advertising manager
took advantage of his
opportunity is shown on
these pages. The adver-
tisements caused a great
deal of comment. If you
like the advertisements,
copy them this year.*



CHAPTER XVII

Public Control of Utilities

I DO not think there is a person who reads this book who will dispute Mr. Wootan's statement that "public control and regulation of utilities is here to stay and that, too, with the cordial approval and co-operation of the utility."

But it must be fair—much more so than at present.

There is no reason why the hazardous investment required to furnish public service should be denied the right of a fair margin of profit the same as a newspaper, a bank or a grocery store.

The fact that a utility is given a franchise by the community does not alter this one whit.

The city grants permission to a utility to use the streets to render the people a service. It retains the right to regulate the utility. But it does not seem to think it is obligated to protect the service. On the other hand, some city officials and newspapers think the utility is there to be destroyed.

The utility enjoys no monopoly of the streets. Every merchant and newspaper uses them for whatever purpose they may desire.

The howl of yellow newspapers and peanut politicians about giving a utility permission to use the streets to furnish a genuine service is bunk and tommyrot.

I know a utility would much rather sell its electricity, gas, telephone calls, street car rides or water in packages the same as the merchant.

I know it would be a thousand times cheaper for them to maintain a fleet of automobile delivery trucks to serve the people, rather than expensive pipe, railway or wire distributing systems.

And I know they would make a great deal more money.

While talking about fair treatment of public utilities I want to drag public utilities commissions into the limelight. Personally I have never met but one man from the office of a public utilities commission, and he was as square to public service corporations as any man I ever met. It is claimed by many that the commissions in various states are not treating them quite as squarely as they could. I hardly believe that this is as serious as most of them believe. There are instances, however, where a great injustice is done public service corporations because the commissions are wrongly advised, as witness this episode :

A highly reputed and very distinguished expert was testifying before the public utilities commission of one of our states a short time ago. He was a state witness against a public utility. He stated that he had made a very careful investigation of certain conditions in the state of Pennsylvania. On cross-examination he was asked if he had visited Duquesne county. The expert with much gusto and puffing stated that he had made a very careful investigation in Duquesne county and had talked with numerous reliable and well-informed persons. He gave a great deal of stout testimony for the state. After he had continued at some length he was asked to locate Duquesne county, and could not do it. As a matter of fact, there is no Duquesne county in Pennsylvania, and the witness had evidently confused Duquesne county with Duquesne club cocktails.

CHAPTER XVIII

Advice From Public Service Man

AS a newspaper man I was constantly in intimate touch with men and women, big and little, crooked and straight, in all parts of the country.

Presidents, governors, senators, congressmen, mayors, sheriffs, police, coke sniffers, pickpockets and murderers. I have known many, I have met many, but—

Of all the men in all the walks of life, with whom I have come in contact, I have never met one, who to my notion, was quite as clever, as honest, and broad-minded as the president of a large middle west public utility.

And I say this despite the fact that one time when a reporter he nearly threw me out of his office when I asked him to uniform his employes so that housewives might identify them from thugs.

I have never met a man in the advertising or publicity profession who had a clearer understanding of Publicity than this man.

For that reason there is reprinted here excerpts from an address he once delivered on Publicity:

Use Discriminating Publicity

“The success of public service companies depends on a clear understanding and appreciation by the public of the service rendered.

“And I am personally inclined to favor a clear, definite presentation of the facts to the public.

“I favor this, because I believe that an honest, con-

servative policy of publicity is conducive to the best interests of any public service company.

"But that policy must be discriminative and discriminating.

"Publicity is not an unmixed good.

"But it is also not an unmixed evil.

"It is a two-edged sword.

"It cuts both ways.

"A good deal depends on the man who is handling the weapon.

"He may cut himself, if he rushes into print too often, or too carelessly.

"Or he can cut down opposition and hostile opinion, if he uses frankness and discretion.

"If you haven't something pleasant to say to the public, it's a pretty good rule not to say anything.

"The old idea of 'making the public like it' was brutal and uncharitable to begin with.

"But, what is more to the point, it was unbusiness-like.

"It was founded on the mistaken idea that good-will wasn't worth anything in dollars and cents.

"The wise modern manager knows better.

"He knows that good-will is a distinct asset.

"He knows that if he is constantly at war with the world, in his private life, he suffers for it as an individual.

"And he also knows that if he is continuously at war with public opinion, in his commercial operations, he suffers for it as a business man.

"Some editors, no doubt, abuse their power.

"And so do some public service corporations.

"Editors, as a class, are just average good men, like the rest of us.

"They have their faults. And so have we.

"We can't keep the good-will of some papers, no matter how fairly and squarely we deal.

"It's their business to oppose.

"But, in the mass, and as a class, publishers will measure up with the rest of us, at least.

"And even if you find them unfair—it's poor business to try and fight that unfairness by angrily rushing into print.

"The minute you get angry, you, too, become—unfair—and the newspaper pounds you to pieces.

"You'd far better keep your temper, and reply temperately—if you reply at all.

"What you consider unfair in the editor, probably seems fair to him.

"Try and convince him of it first, man to man.

"If you can't—keep a cool, still tongue between your teeth.

"In the language of the Mutt and Jeff cartoons—'For the love of Mike, be reasonable'—be reasonable above and beyond everything else.

"Sometimes silence is the best sort of publicity.

"If you refrain from making the hot retort you meant to make, when your feelings were 'roused, it's astonishing how glad you'll feel sometimes, a week later.

“The silent man nearly always has the best of an emergency—anyway.

“The letter that wasn’t written is often the letter that got the business.

“The favor that wasn’t asked is often the favor that’s gladly given.

“People cool off in the face of a strong but good-natured silence.”

CHAPTER XIX

Utilities Must Keep Awake

PUBLIC utilities must always be on the alert and be consistent advertisers to forestall unfair criticism.

They must anticipate attacks and steal the newspapers' thunder.

A yellow newspaper and a couple blackleg politicians can make an agitator out of a city in two weeks.

At first blush the people are inclined to give a patient and sympathetic ear to such fools and their hair brain schemes.

And for a time they are likely to build air castles with the dreamers instead of sewers in the ground and pavements in the streets.

But there will always come an awakening.

The workingman sooner or later will realize that factories cannot be built without capital. And he will realize that capital does not have to beg for a market and will not go where treated unfairly.

He will patiently watch the money pouring into other cities where it is given a square deal and wait for it to recognize his city in the sky. But when it continues to pass him by, the chances are that he will pull stakes, follow it and leave the Yellow Back and the derelict politician in the mire with their uplift fads and municipal schemes.

And it is not surprising that he should awaken. He is not the ignorant, easily bamboozled nondescript that most Yellow Backs believe him to be.

What surprises me is the dormant, sleepy, calloused attitude of the merchants—hard-headed successful businessmen.

They have money invested. They must depend on a thrifty city for protection of their investment. They support the newspapers with their advertising.

And 99 times out of 100 you will find their advertising choking the very Yellow sheet which is undermining their business with agitation and unfair hostility that builds circulation for a time—but which keeps capital and industries out of their city.

Just why these merchants remain dumfounded while a newspaper hammers honest industry and keeps builders out of a city is more than I can fathom.

Directly they are not being attacked.

But indirectly they are the real sufferers—the real losers.

The wonder of it is, that they do not see it.

CHAPTER XX

Sell Service

PUBLIC service men admit that they are persecuted by some newspapers.

And they admit that a great number of their customers have a mistaken idea of the value of the service they render.

They should realize that these conditions are negative and that they should be made positive.

Knowing that they have a valuable service and that they are giving the public its money's worth, I cannot understand why they do not take the proper steps to eradicate dangerous and damaging misconceptions of the service they are rendering.

Looking at this tangled problem from the viewpoint of a newspaperman and a rank outsider, but also as one who is familiar with public service, I will try to show some of the steps which might be taken to get on a closer and friendlier relation with the newspaper and the public.

Courtesy and Humanity Needed

First—It is presumed that fundamentally the corporation is grounded on courtesy—courtesy such as I have told about.

Second—Be human.

I have found that some public service corporations and some of the foremost utility men have a mistaken idea of dignity. They think that the minute their investment reaches nine figures and their dividends show six per cent, that they should immediately assume a dignified

plutocratic attitude. They become arrogant and stand-offish, and wonder why the public dislikes to do business with them. They forget the days when they had to be sweet-tempered and patient, and they acquire a starchy attitude that spells unfriendliness.

Third—Have one person to meet and study the people.

No one can deny that the people rule. Even a public utility man will tell you that. But while admitting this, most of them are neglecting to send an ambassador to the people to clearly and honestly present the cause of the utility in a friendly way.

The bigger the corporation the more friendly it must be. To keep on good terms with the people, it must smile, cater, shake hands and show deference to the wishes of the people. A man will jump from the path of a Packard. A little Ford does not terrorize him. The people are naturally more afraid of a big corporation than they are of a small one. It is up to the big corporations to show that they are, if anything, more desirable and more friendly than a small corporation, instead of more dangerous.

Fourth—Sell service.

The Colossal Mistake of the Past

Most public service corporations are not selling their most valuable commodity. It has been their custom to sell gas, electricity, water and railway tickets—while they furnish service. This has been one of their biggest mistakes. The very minute they stop this and start to sell gas service, electric service, germless water service and safe railway service, just that minute will there be a noticeable change on the part of their patrons.

A gas company buys meters for the service they give—not because they are merely meters. An electric company buys wire for the service it will give—not because it is wire. There are thousands of pumps being sold, but a water company will buy the one which gives the best service. A railway company will purchase the cars which give the best service. Everything that a utility purchases must give service. Utilities are in the business of selling service. Being in the business of selling a certain service, I cannot understand why most of them insist on merely selling gas, electricity, water or railway tickets. It costs millions to give service, but very few of them are selling it in their advertising and through their salesmen. And do not forget that to give the best service, every man must furnish interested co-operation and not indifferent and arbitrary attention.

Public service companies of the gas, water and electricity type will also take another step forward when they quit selling their service to “consumers” and stop advertising to “consumers.”

Consume means to destroy, swallow up, absorb, waste, squander, dissipate. For instance: a fire consumes a house.

But a customer buys something regularly and repeatedly and gets his money's worth. I think it is high time that public service companies were honoring a patron with the title of “customer.”

CHAPTER XXI

Do Not Advertise, If—

THERE is no doubt but what the best way to reach a customer is through newspaper advertising.

But every public service corporation should not advertise.

The only ones who should spend any money to reach their customers are those who are rendering a service. If your company is merely selling gas, or electricity, or water, or railway tickets, then it will do you no good to advertise. If on the other hand it is rendering a real service and the people do not appreciate the value of this service, it is up to you to advertise in a legitimate, honest way. If you cannot find a man who can write clear, truthful advertising, then it would be better to save your money.

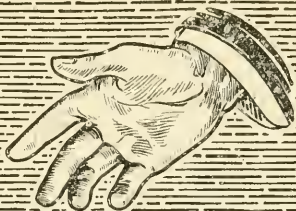
Public service corporations are beginning to realize more and more every day the value of publicity. The day is here when it is to be decided whether or not an open hand or a clenched fist policy shall rule. I believe I am safe in saying that the open hand policy is bound to rule, for there is not one man with a single grain of intelligence, who will give this matter the thought that it deserves, who will not immediately declare himself in favor of being friendly with the people, in talking with them instead of AT them.

Remember these words—

Talk WITH the people.

Do not talk AT them.

In the succeeding pages I am reprinting some advertisements showing how some corporations are talking with their customers. They typify what I believe to be the kind of advertising that public service corporations need.



Open Hand or Clenched Fist?

Can a \$50,000,000 concern be as friendly as the corner groverman?

Or does bigness bring arrogance, plutocracy and stand-offishness?

There is no reason under the sun why it should!

We know, and you know, that a human Open-Hand policy brings Friendship, Fairness and Co-Operation.

It helps us to understand one another and become sympathetically related.

You place yourself in our position and you say:

"What with a \$50,000,000 investment to protect, thousands of miles of pipe lines to maintain, tons and tons of materials to buy, a mammoth pay-roll to meet, 175,000 families to serve perfectly, etc., the Old Gas Company hasn't such a snap after all."

On the other hand we place ourselves in your position and try to see our own imperfections and how we may know you better.

One of the means we have of getting in closer touch with you is—Publicity.

We are persistent advertisers but for a time we are going to ignore all set advertising rules and tell you some human interest stories about ourselves.

The next one appears in this paper Tuesday.

Won't you watch for these stories, read them and write us what you think of them?

"Service and Courtesy"

TABOO DIGNITY

Dignity is the ruination of more men and of more corporations than any other single thing.

You do not like to buy groceries from a crabbed, discourteous, taciturn grocerman, and neither does the public like to buy gas, electricity, or telephone service from an arrogant public service corporation.

The accompanying advertisement typifies the attitude and kind of advertising that will bring most benefit to public service corporations.



Why Should the
(name of Co.) Gas
Co. Advertise?

Gas Service gives
you heat.

Coal gives you heat.
Oil gives you heat.
Gasoline gives you
heat.

Shrewd business men
are at the head of
coal, oil and gaso-
line companies.

They furnish keen com-
petition.

The name of Co., Gas
Co. MUST advertise
to meet this com-
petition.

But there is still an-
other "just as impor-
tant" reason why we
should advertise.

We sincerely want to
be as human and
close to you as the
corner grocery man.

And it is only thru ad-
vertising that we can
tell you the intensive
human story of how
men, brains and
money furnish you
the Best and Cheap-
est Service in the
World.

Be sure and read our
story in this paper
next Tuesday.

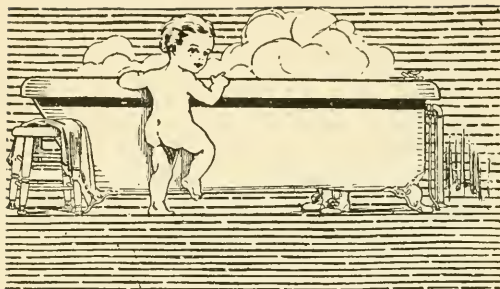
"Service and Courtesy"

WHY ADVERTISE?

*Public Service men often
ask themselves the question
"Why should we advertise?"*

*They also hear many peo-
ple ask the question, "Why
should a Public Service Cor-
poration advertise?"*

*I hope that you have asked
yourself that question and
that you have heard other
people ask it, for I believe
the accompanying advertise-
ment answers it. The same
advertisement with a few
changes can be applied to
most any public service cor-
poration.*



PROTECT BABY!

Baby's bath water is gas heated.

Baby's food is warmed with gas.

In most homes the atmosphere is kept clean and of an even temperature—with gas.

Playing the part we do in preserving Baby's health we are naturally interested in all babies.

Last year in our own organization there were over 300 babies born.

Which has nothing to do with furnishing you the Best and Cheapest Gas Service in the world—but we thought it might interest you.

Watch for our next story. We are going to tell you the number of children supported by our men.

(Name of Company)

"Service and Courtesy"

HELP BABY, HELP YOURSELF

Nothing will so attract attention as the picture of a baby.

If you ever have the opportunity to write an advertisement around baby, its health or comfort, by all means take advantage of it the same as an advertising manager did in the accompanying advertisement.

CHAPTER XXII

Advertisement Cause Comment

THE advertisement you have just read and similar ones created a great deal of comment in the city where they appeared.

Customers of the gas company wrote many letters, asking for more advertisements of the same kind and complimenting the company on the stand it took.

Following are two samples of the kind of letters received. I am reprinting them because they contain some valuable hints.

July 21, 1916.

Gentlemen: I am a new-comer to this city, having been here only two months.

I hope that the gas company employes here are as courteous as those in . . . , and I have no doubt they are. If they are as abusive as telephone company employes in . . . , they will surely LAUGH at your advertising. They will know that you are not sincere. And if they know it it won't be long before others know it too. If you are not treating your employes as your advertisement infers then your advertising is not only childish, but foolish.

Taking it for granted that you do treat your employes justly, I do not think your advertising childish. On the contrary in no better way can you gain the confidence of those to whom you sell your wares, gas, stoves, accessories, etc.

Of course it is not up to me to tell you how to run your advertising department, but since you ask for frank

criticism I am going to give it to you straight from the shoulder—or rather typewriter.

I would carry your advertising even further. I would tell what you do to make your employes happy and contented. I would take an entire page in a newspaper and print all their pictures there. In separate advertisements I would run the names of the men or women in certain departments, right down to the office boy.

And I wouldn't stop there. I would encourage every man and woman and youth who works for the company to buy property. I would loan them the money on mortgage. And I would advertise that I did it. And from time to time I would publish, if they would consent, the names of such purchasers. And I would print pictures of their homes.

And one of the very first things I would do would be to call a meeting of all my employes and tell them that from TODAY ON promotion would come to the man or woman who was deserving of it. And I would have a man who would make monthly or weekly reports on every employe, a man with a big heart, who would hear the complaint of a worker who thought his or her overseer overbearing and tyrannical. Don't you know that hundreds of men and women who in time would be valuable workers quit their positions because of unjust treatment. They know that it would be useless to go to the man higher up. You know just as well as I do that there are certain firms who NEVER can keep a stenographer or clerk or bookkeeper for any length of time. BECAUSE THEY DON'T TREAT THEIR EMPLOYES RIGHT.

Verily "the heads of advertising men swim with theories, psychology and rules," to quote your own advertisement. But do the heads of employers swim with

theories of justice to their workers?

I am not an I. W. W., Socialist, a hair-brained crank. Just an every-day American who believes that a firm such as yours who can see the light of right-treatment of workers will profit a hundred-fold as against the one that is as hard as flint.

I am for your kind of advertising with all my heart. Go to it.

Another letter received is reprinted here:

Gentlemen: Your advertisement in this morning's paper asks for remarks, and I therefore take the liberty of enclosing a few pages of ideas hastily jotted down, with the hope that you may find something of value in them. I have been quite interested in the attempts made by various public service corporations to influence public opinion. In most cases they have waited until too late; in other cases they have stopped too soon, and in a few cases they have won out handily. While not an exact parallel to your company I would call attention to the work done by the City Service Co. of Chicago, one of the shining examples of how to make the public your friend.

There is a growing tendency on the part of corporations to take the people into their confidence, and it is one of the signs of the times that is favorable, although it seems strange that when the entire fabric of the commercial world is woven through and through with confidence it has taken so long to learn that the confidence of the public has real value. However, we are waking up at last and I would be glad to see your company take a leading position in the good work.

While advertising experts advance many formulas, abstract rules, psychological theories and mental rules, all more or less at variance but all in the interest of more

profitable advertising, there are three facts upon which all are practically agreed :

1. Advertising should be persistent and continuous, rather than interrupted and intermittent.
2. Advertising should attract and hold the interest of the reader.
3. Advertising should sway the mind of the reader to the viewpoint desired by the advertiser. Whether this is to be by forcible statement or mild persuasion, by direct effort or indirect argument, depends upon conditions apart from the advertising itself.

The Average Man will see a builder put up a \$3,000.00 house, and will rent it for \$30.00 a month, move in and pay rent for years without ever thinking that he is paying for the house. He knows the builder invested capital in it and is entitled to some return on his investment. But when it comes to a public service corporation he seems to go blind, and is firmly convinced that the income from consumers pays everything, investment, depreciation, operating expense, losses and profit, chiefly profit. He seems to know little or nothing about the investment by stockholders and bondholders, the loans required to finance operations, or the actual workings of the corporation, but is firmly convinced that what he is paying is too much ; no matter what the price is, it is too much.

Take Advantage of the Average Man's Attitude Toward Public Service Corporations

Because the average man is "agin" public service corporations is the very reason why there is a splendid opportunity for some such corporation to become a shining example of right dealing by having public opinion with it. And if the corporation is dealing fair with the

public it only requires persistent advertising of the reason why kind to win the good will of the public. Nearly all disturbances or interruptions of public service require prompt and rapid action to restore normal conditions, and such action always possesses the element of excitement, therefore can be made the basis of interesting advertisement.

Inasmuch as the average man does little thinking of his own, but gets his opinions ready made, mostly from the newspapers, there is no reason why he should not be influenced by advertising as well as by editorials and scare head news fakes of sensational papers. It requires steady, persistent work, but it can be done—is being done by many concerns today. On the contrary, though, some firms wait until the last minute and then attempt to influence public opinion under a handicap. The present attempt of the Bethlehem Steel Co. to swing public opinion in opposition to a Government armor plate plant is an example. If the same work had been done years ago the chances for the success of their advertising campaign would have been much greater.

As to advertising about the number of employees, the number of school children of employees, etc., it is good advertising, for it appeals to the underlying interest of the average man as to how the other man is living. Also it humanizes the company, takes away some of the grim, forbidding "corporation" atmosphere, and gives the impression that your company is composed of a lot of human beings pretty much like the rest of us, making mistakes, possibly, but plugging along at their work and trying to do what they have to do in this world. And when you can get the great unthinking public to look upon a corporation as possessing the element of humanity, as composed of persons who eat, sleep work, play and suffer just like they do, you have driven the opening wedge deep

into the blind, unreasoning prejudice prevalent today against organized capital.

It is a great biological law governing Nature that everything in the world of life is born, has a period of growth and development, a period of gradual decline, then dies. This applies to world systems as well as to microbes, and is not to be evaded. Another law is that growth and development proceed best in a favorable environment. Now by the legal fiction of the corporation man has endeavored to produce a commercial enterprise that will never die, with what success it is yet too early to determine, although we know that the law of decline and death will eventually work its result. But we do know it to be true that a commercial enterprise will grow and develop best in a favorable environment. If it is a public service corporation, therefore, the most favorable environment will be the good will of the public. It must be true, then, that this good will is worth going after—is worth any reasonable cost.

CHAPTER XXIII

Proper Kind of Publicity to Use

YOU are probably a public service man, the representative of a public utility.

You probably have not been getting a square deal.

You probably do not possess the friends you should have.

And I know that you want them.

One of the best ways of securing them is through the right kind of advertising and publicity.

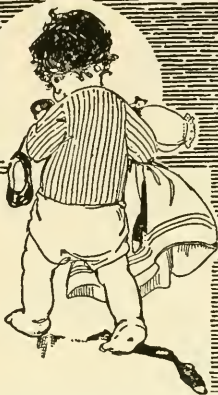
But I hear you say that such advertising is unnecessary if a company is giving courteous, valuable and reasonably priced service.

You know better.

The average man does not appreciate the vast amount of wealth, human energy, brains and skill required to give a certain service, unless he is told.

When he steps on a street car and drops a nickel in the fare box, he does not realize that he is getting the use of an investment of millions of nickels. When he snaps the electric lights he does not realize that for a very small sum he has a share in the use of several million dollars worth of equipment and the service of possibly several thousand employees. To appreciate these things he must know them.

No customer can or will realize your problems and your obstacles unless you tell him. And the more perfect your service, the more you have to sell, the more you have to talk and advertise.



Boom the Babies

Greater . . . has 50,000 babies.

Just 16,623 were born last year in alone.

This is their week.

It is called Better Baby Week.

The U. S. National Children's Bureau is sponsor for it.

Better Babies—Stronger Babies is the object.

Mothers are to be helped in solving their infant problems.

is to be a center of the Bureau's activities.

It will be the duty, yes the privilege, of every person to help Boom . . . Babies—the finest in the land.

• • • • •

Babies need proper nourishment.

They must be clothed properly.

And every baby is entitled to a warm home in winter—a cool home in summer.

Else, food and clothing will profit little.

Where homes are heated with Gas Service the temperature is unvarying—uniform.

The home is not warm one hour and cold the next. The air is clean and pure.

There is no smoke, no dust, no soot to fill baby's lungs.

More than any other single element Gas Service has helped . . . mothers raise Better Babies—Healthier Babies.

An expert will estimate the cost of heating your home if you will call or write the "Good Service" Department. 1

BABY WEEK OPPORTUNITIES

Every year the entire country observes Better Baby Week.

It offers wonderful opportunities for gas and electric companies to secure valuable good-will and sales publicity.

The manner in which one advertising manager took advantage of his opportunity is shown on these pages. The advertisements caused a great deal of comment. If you like the advertisements, copy them this year.



Unreserved publicity will solve the difficulty.

But it must be the right kind.

Assuming now that you are furnishing a valuable service at a reasonable cost ; that your employes are courteous and that you are fair—this is your biggest problem :

You must bring the people to realize that the vested rights of capital must be respected and that public service corporations must be given a square deal from the newspapers and politicians.

The most popular pastime today is the heaving of brickbats at capital. On every hand corporations of every kind are being unfairly and insolently condemned. One public utility after another is dishonestly held up to public ridicule.

When the street railway company is not being lambasted on general principles the gas companies or illuminating companies are being accused of charging extortionate rates, watering stock or pumping air into the gas.

Be careful or in ten years' time you will be bankrupt like most of our railroads, the most startling victims of unfair newspapers, politicians, sentiment and their own secrecy, silence and taciturnity.

And look out for your city. Do everything that you can to keep it from becoming like a "city of the dead," similar to the one in a big central west city.

In this particular city 75 per cent of the office buildings were vacant ; banks have made no appreciable increase in 15 years and the city will soon have to make some apology for its condition.

The unfairness of its politicians, newspapers and crusaders is to blame.

Be careful that you are not the next victim—that your city is not the next one to be shunned by capital, by builders.

Play fair yourself and demand fairness.

But whatever you do be human, courteous, alert and—advertise.

Let me repeat this warning:

Talk with your customers.

Do not talk AT them.

Remember those words.

You will win.

CHAPTER XXIV

Let Bygones Be Bygones

MANY public utility companies not on a perfect understanding with their customers at the present time, expect to place large quantities of these little books in the hands of their customers. Knowing this, I have tried to make the book of general interest to public service men and the public. Naturally I wanted to convey to the public in the clearest manner this sincere longing of public utilities to be on the friendliest and closest relations with them.

Several times I have tried to reveal this unfeigned and frank desire on the part of the public utility men but failed miserably to express myself as I really wanted to. Just as I was about to give up in despair there came to me an article from Mr. Lucius S. Bigelow, a student of public utilities and their methods. Mr. Bigelow is well known to all public service men and more particularly to gas men as the editor of the *Natural Gas Journal*. His article expresses exactly what I wanted to put in words and is reprinted here:

LET THE PRESENT OBSCURE THE PAST

By Lucius S. Bigelow.

The feuds of the mountain Whites of Kentucky remind one of how we all, in fact, live more or less in the same atmosphere.

We see ourselves reflected in these mountain dwellers, to the extent that when once we have become inflamed

by any injustice, we hold it against not alone the one who has been unjust, but against the whole clan, a score that it is very difficult for us to erase, even though the descendants of the aggressors be ever so upright and just.

How to live down such things of the past, is not contemplated by the mountain Whites, but it is by the public utility companies of today.

Old Commodore Vanderbilt put words on a par with actions, that both might give like utterance to his sentiments regarding the relationship between the public and the utilities.

In his expression, "The Public be Damned," the Commodore told the truth in plain English, of the attitude at that time of the utility corporations which he controlled. No doubt the sentiment existed with many similar corporations in those days.

Today the public in an unjust manner is holding against utility corporations the actions and words of days gone by and so they are as unjust on their side today as were those corporations, now passed into history, so far as their former methods and management are concerned.

Today every effort is put forth by utility corporations in general to accomplish "service" on behalf of the public. "Service" is discussed at "utility" conventions. How can we render the best and most acceptable "service" is a type of title of many papers presented. In the discussions of papers "Better Service to the Public" is frequently the theme.

Why then is it that the public cannot, or will not, forget the injustice that was doubtless the text of certain utilities in former years, in view of the purpose toward and the liberal action and treatment of the public by utilities of today.

Let this injustice pass from the records of today and let the purpose and intent on the part of the people be to forget, if they cannot forgive, the past. Let them help rather than hinder the efforts on the part of utilities and make possible a greater harvest of service to the public. Utilities have been sowing service seeds during the more recent years and will continue to sow and endeavor faithfully to cultivate a closer friendship with the public just as long as there is a chance that the public will reciprocate.

The whole matter put in a nutshell is simply this:

The public and the public service corporations must help to bear one another's burdens and each must train itself to believe in the other. When these two features are accomplished there will be few complaints of the public service corporations by the public and of the public by the corporations.

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